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ABSTRACT

Six lectures presented by TESOL experts for the 1973 Annual Defense Language Institute are summarized and discussed here. The first paper, by John B. Carroll, "Some Suggestions from a Psycholinguist," concerns the relationship between learning and memory. Albert H. Marckwardt, in "The Dictionary as an English Teaching Resource," recommends the dictionary as a teacher resource for providing information about language. Archibald A. Hill, in "A Hierarchy of Drills," reconsiders some of the major structuralist assumptions about language, providing some additional techniques for the teacher. Muriel Saville-Troike, in "Reading and the Audio-Lingual Method," points out that the audiolingual method did not easily lend itself to the teaching of reading, and because reading cannot be separated from second language learning, extensive suggestions for the teaching of reading are provided. Rebecca M. Valette, in "Developing and Evaluating Communication Skills in the Classroom," clarifies the relation of testing to instructional objectives by exploring the ways of teaching and testing communication skills in the four modes--speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Betty Wallace Robinett, in "The Application of Lingusitics to TESOL: Once More," recommends and demonstrates a rapprochement between linguistics and TESOL in which the teacher is the middleman, whose primary resource is the knowledge of how English functions. (LG)

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1974 TESOL CONVENTION

OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Denver, Colorado, March 5–10, 1974

DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE BRANCH
Lackland Air Force Base, Texas 78236

The attached Final Report presents summaries and discussions of six lectures presented by John B. Carroll, Albert H. Marckwardt, Archibald A. Hill, Muriel Saville-Troike, Rebecca M. Valette, and Betty Wallace Robinett to the staff and faculty of the Defense Language Institute English Language Branch (DLIEL). This represents the 1973 annual DLI Master Lecture Series on TESOL, which is the fifth such series given at DLIEL by distinguished TESOL experts.

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Part I. Foreword

The papers presented here constituted a series of six lectures delivered on a contractual basis with the TESOL organization to the staff members of the English Language Branch--Defense Language Institute, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The English Language Branch has a faculty of approximately seventy members and trains about 3000 students a year in the United States, at the same time supporting foreign military schools in some fifty countries whose operations involve as many as 500,000 students a year.

Though the lecture series was established to serve as a basis for a discussion of the state of affairs in teaching English as a second language for the staff members of the DLIELB, it has, since its inception in 1969, also served in that role for the profession as a whole through publication of the lectures in the TESOL Quarterly.

The lecturers for the fifth series bring several different disciplinary backgrounds to their analyses of how teachers can facilitate the process of second language learning. This diversity of orientation reflects the broadening of the knowledge base for classroom practice that has been advocated in the professional forums of recent years.

The lectures, delivered during the period from January to June, 1973, are printed in the order in which they were presented. They are followed by a short summary and discussion.

The papers will be published as a group in the December 1973 issue of the TESOL Quarterly (Vol. VII, No. 4).

Author	Title	Date*
John B. Carroll	Some Suggestions from a Psycholinguist	January 30, 1973
Albert H. Marckwardt	The Dictionary as an English Teaching Resource	February 21, 1973
Archibald A. Hill	A Hierarchy of Drills	March 21, 1973
Muriel Saville-Troike	Reading and the Audio-Lingual Method	April 25, 1973
Rebecca M. Valette	Developing and Evaluating Communication Skills in the Classroom	May 21, 1973
Betty Wallace Robinett	The Application of Linguistics to TESOL: Once More	June 21, 1973

*Date paper was presented at the Defense Language Institute English Language Branch, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas

Part II. Summary and Discussion

In one familiar tallying system, the fifth tally is the one that gathers up the preceding four to constitute a unit of five. Five is only a unit of convenience, with its basis probably in the anatomy of our fingers and toes. Yet, since we think easily in terms of fives, since the 1973 Lackland Lectures collected here are the fifth series in as many years, and since in our culture five years is long enough to encompass trends, now seems as good a time as any to pause and take stock, to identify if we can the focal concerns which might characterize our professional development of the past five years.

What the five series of lectures seem to tell us in retrospect is that in 1969, the year of the first series, we were struggling with implications of theory, most notably recent linguistic theory, for second language instruction, particularly in the area of materials development. Finding linguistic theory somewhat recalcitrant, and only just beginning to explore the relevance of recent work in other disciplines, like psychology, we turned in the first three years of the 70s to examination of pedagogical practice, looking to the needs of our students for guidance. In the 1970 lecture series, workable classroom practices were explored. In the 1971 series the relation between language drills and language use was of major interest, and classroom practices directed toward developing communicative competence were foregrounded. In 1972 a search was on for ways of contextualizing classroom instruction in keeping with communication goals. Also in 1972 there were hints of renewed attention to the theoretical underpinnings of our classroom practices. In the present set of 1973 lectures a significant

amount of interplay between theory--or perhaps more accurately, disciplinary knowledge--and practice emerges, with the classroom teacher the mediator. So, this fifth lecture series does, in a sense, gather up the first four, returning to attention to theory, as in the first series, but to a broader-based theory, and at the same time maintaining the classroom perspective of the next three series.

The first paper, by Carroll, sets a modest, realistic tone, echoed in the following papers. Especially in his guidelines concerning listening comprehension and active learning, less so in the summary of his efforts to develop a performance grammar, he provides helpful suggestions, with psychological rationale, which a teacher can easily implement. Of particular interest is his discussion of memory processes, an area which seems increasingly to be coming to the attention of students of language. On the basis of the information that Carroll provides, classroom teachers can immediately see a role for themselves in keeping track of what a learner has been taught and then at appropriate times pushing him to retrieve particular items from his intermediate memory, thus engaging him in the kind of active learning that Carroll suggests is necessary to ensure storage of information in what he calls "truly long-term memory."

Marckwardt, too, in the second paper, is concerned with providing the teacher with information, this time information about language, to be used at the teacher's discretion as the need arises to answer questions about language posed by the student, by the teaching materials at hand, or by the teacher himself. He recommends the dictionary as a valuable resource whose potential has not been fully exploited nor even recognized. His argu-

ment that lexicographers have come closer than grammarians to dealing with language in its totality is convincing, as is the concomitant argument that teachers should be educated in the full and enlightened use of the dictionary.

In the third paper, Hill places himself in the shoes of a language teacher who no longer accepts some of the major structuralist assumptions about language and language learning but who still finds much that is sensible in the structuralist approach to language teaching, to which he adds other techniques that he feels serve language learning needs. The progression of language drills which Hill proposes does, however, indicate a pervading reliance on structuralist theory. He correctly singles out the usefulness of the structuralist notion of contrast, exemplified by drill on language features that sound the same and those that sound different. It would have been interesting if he had explored the notion of sameness and difference in terms not only of sound but also of meaning. Hill's position that there is no one system of language teaching, that there are as many systems as teachers, is realistic. His suggestions are useful for some language learning goals.

As Saville-Troike points out in her paper, however, the audiolingual method did not easily lend itself to the teaching of reading, at least not in TESOL. Her discussion of what is involved in reading is informed by recent work in linguistics, with its view of language as abstract knowledge underlying concrete performance. Her emphasis on the necessity for a reader to respond to syntactic information, particularly in the form that is favored in written language, makes the important point that learning to read in a

second language cannot be separated from learning the language. Her suggestions for approaches to the teaching of reading, especially to advanced students, cover an impressive amount of territory. Interestingly, many of her suggestions seem as applicable to first as to second language learners, indicating perhaps that when the enormous complexity of language is revealed, as in recent research, some of the same implications hold for first as well as for second language teaching.

Valette not only clarifies the relation of testing to instructional objectives but also sorts out some of the objectives that have tended to get muddled together in the teaching process. Her timely and full discussion of ways of teaching and testing communication skills in the four modes--speaking, writing, listening, and reading--should serve teachers well. It is interesting in passing to note her order of discussing these four modes. She is not implying any teaching order, but the organization of her discussion reflects her own linking of speaking and writing on the one hand and listening and reading on the other. Carroll and Saville-Troike, too, refer to the receptive/productive dimensions, an organization of the four skills which has a different theoretical base from the long familiar organization in terms of order of acquisition in the first language.

Robinett, in the last paper, returns to the familiar topic of the application of linguistics to second language teaching. In the last two decades advocacy of such application has moved, to exaggerate only somewhat, from an article of faith to a suspect, if not discredited, shibboleth. Robinett recommends and demonstrates a rapprochement between linguistics and TESOL in which the teacher is the middleman. Like Marckwardt, she is concerned with providing language teachers with resources for them to draw on

as needed, and like him, the resource that she is talking about is knowledge of how English functions. Using illustrations relevant to the TESOL classroom, she discusses how grammars written from various linguistic points of view can provide helpful information for the language teacher. Of special significance is her emphasis on linguistic information that illuminates the ways that utterances convey meaning.

All six papers in one way or another, by precept or example or implication, suggest that a teacher's responses to learner needs must often be spontaneous and circumstantial, and that for them to be so the teacher must have resources of knowledge to draw on. Packaged materials simply cannot predict what learning experiences will be most appropriate for particular students at particular times. This state of affairs would seem to be a corollary of the goal of communicative competence.

These six papers give the teacher a good notion of some of the domains of knowledge that will stand him in good stead. He needs to know about the relation between the receptive and productive skills, which Carroll touches on, and about the memory processes that he describes. He needs to know how language works and where to go to fill in gaps in his knowledge. Marckwardt and Robinett provide directions. He needs to know that even though there is no one approach to teaching, all approaches imply something about the practitioners' notions of the nature of language and language learning, as Hill and Saville-Troike exemplify. He needs to know more precisely what his instructional objectives are and how to test what he has taught. This knowledge needs to be based on clear notions about the nature of language and language learning, as Valette's analyses of teaching and testing demonstrate.

The teacher, then, is in the middle. He must mediate between theory and practice. He must draw on theory, on knowledge, from this discipline or that, as it serves what he judges to be the needs of his students. The present set of papers makes a real contribution to the professionalization of the TESOL teacher.